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# Certification changes happening for EMS and trauma systems

**FROM THIS SIDE**

A very happy and safe New Year to all. As we begin 2007, the Office of EMS/Trauma Systems Coordination is looking at two significant changes for EMS providers. Computerized testing for all initial and recertification candidates began January 1. Initial and recertification applicants will now take NREMT testing for ECA, EMT, EMT-I and paramedic on computers at Pearson VUE testing centers. There are 19 centers located across the state, with two more locations still pending. For a list of testing centers and other articles that have run in the magazine over the past year, please go to [www.tdh.state.tx.us/hcqs/ems](http://www.tdh.state.tx.us/hcqs/ems) and click on "Computerized Testing News." Page 18 in this issue also has some good information.

The Comprehensive Clinical Management Program (CCMP), the other big potential change to EMS certification, has taken significant steps forward. CCMP, an alternative route for EMS personnel to recertify, is another pathway to clinical excellence for EMS providers and allows a fifth option of certification and licensure renewal of their employees. At this year's Texas EMS Conference, a group led by Kelly Curry, Allen Johnson and Leigh Anne Bedrich taught providers about CCMP and how to start the process. The class was a culmination of several years' work, including a pilot program in which three courageous EMS providers opened their doors to CCMP surveyors. We'll be bringing you updates as the CCMP process progresses.

On January 9, the 80th Texas Legislature convenes. While this is not much more than a footnote in the local news for some, to those of us at DSHS in Austin, it begins 140 days of intense work as we provide analysis and cost estimates for bills that would affect EMS and trauma systems. By mid-December, hundreds of bills had already been filed for the upcoming session. Things happen quickly during session, but we'll try to keep any updates we have on bills posted on our website. Once the gavel comes down on May 28, we'll compile a wrap-up of the bills that affected EMS and trauma systems for the July/August issue of *Texas EMS Magazine*.

As I write this, we have just finished the conference in Dallas. There are so many people to thank that we couldn't possibly name them all. The bottom line is that we could not make this conference a success without the support of many EMS/trauma systems stakeholders across this great state. Many thanks to each of you who participated as an attendee, volunteer or exhibitor. We are already working on Texas EMS Conference 2007, which will be held in Houston.

The Governor's EMS and Trauma Advisory Council (GETAC) will be back in Austin on February 23 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel near I-35 and U.S. 290 East. Committee meetings will take place February 20-22. Watch our website for a schedule of meetings. You can book a room at the state rate of \$85/single by calling (512) 323-5466. See you in Austin in February...



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